

ORIGIN/ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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TO : Department of State

INFO : Amembassy ATHENS, ROME(3)
Amconsul FLORENCE, GENOA, MILAN, PALERMO, TRIESTE, TURIN
AFSE/SIO

FROM : Amconsul NAPLES

SUBJECT : Neapolitans React Negatively to Political Developments in Greece

REF :

Most Neapolitans reacted negatively to the seizure of power by the Greek Army, although the majority of the political leaders have limited themselves to lamenting the events as a "blow to democracy" and offering moral support to the Greek people. The Naples Provincial Council passed a resolution deploring the situation in Greece and pledging solidarity with the Greek people in their search to reestablish democracy in that country. A PCI attempt to entice the Naples City Council to express a similar resolution was nipped in the bud when Mayor Giovanni PRINCIPES refused to recognize the PCI motion on grounds that the City Council has no jurisdiction to become involved in international affairs (and thus set a precedent for discussion of Viet-Nam, an issue which Principe has successfully kept off the floor of the City Council). Indeed, Monarchists and Fascists were the only supporters of the recent coup, which they publically interpreted as a pre-emptive military takeover, necessary in the face of a planned Communist uprising against the Greek State.

On April 22, a large number of the over 300 Greek students who are studying in the Naples area, supported by PCI youths, held a protest demonstration before the Greek Consulate. Shouting anti-military and anti-King Constantine chants, as well as bearing banners with similar slogans, the demonstrators were quickly scattered by local police authorities after several minor incidents. A sign with the number 114 was placed prominently over the entrance to the headquarters of the Greek-Italian Association, referring to Article 114 of the Greek Constitution (constitutional liberty).

There was further rioting following a large (authorized) meeting on April 25 (the 22nd anniversary of the "Italian Liberation"), sponsored by the Naples Communist Youth Federation (FGCI). The rally had been initially billed as an anti-U.S. Viet-Nam demonstration, but turned into a "Parade for the Freedom of Viet-Nam and Greece" following the developments in Greece. Violent

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Clearances: